



How Aruban beaches came to be!



LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY
PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

MONDAY:

ANDERSON BAHAMON
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

TUESDAY:

JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

WEDNESDAY:

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

THURSDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

FRIDAY:

MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST
7:00 TO 9:00 P.M.

SATURDAY:

RICKY THOMAS
GUITAR
6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.



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Coast Guard is pursuing another tanker helping Venezuela skirt sanctions, U.S. official says



President Donald Trump holds a cell phone with a call to Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang as he departs on Air Force One at Rocky Mount-Wilson Regional Airport, Friday, Dec. 19, 2025, in Elm City, N.C.

Associated Press

By **AAMER MADHANI**
Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — The U.S. Coast Guard on Sunday was pursuing an-

other sanctioned oil tanker in the Caribbean Sea as the Trump administration appeared to be intensifying its targeting of such ves-

sels connected to Venezuelan government. The pursuit of the tanker, which was confirmed by a U.S. official briefed on the operation, comes after the U.S. administration announced Saturday it had seized a tanker for the second time in less than two weeks. The official, who was not authorized to comment publicly about the ongoing operation and spoke on the condition of anonymity, said Sunday's pursuit involved "a sanctioned dark fleet vessel that is part of Venezuela's illegal sanctions evasion." The official said the vessel was flying a false flag and under a judicial seizure order. The Coast Guard's pursuit

of the tanker was first reported by Reuters. Saturday's predawn seizure of a Panama-flagged vessel called Centuries targeted what the White House described as a "falsely flagged vessel operating as part of the Venezuelan shadow fleet to traffic stolen oil." The Coast Guard, with assistance from the Navy, seized a sanctioned tanker called Skipper on Dec. 10, another part of the shadow fleet of tankers that the U.S. says operates on the fringes of the law to move sanctioned cargo. It was not even flying a nation's flag when it was seized by the Coast Guard. President Donald Trump, after that first seizure, said that the U.S. would carry out a "blockade" of Venezuela. It all comes as Trump has ratcheted up his rhetoric toward Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro. This past week Trump demanded that Venezuela return assets that it seized from U.S. oil companies years ago, justifying anew his announcement of a "blockade" against oil tankers traveling to or from the South American country that face American sanctions. Trump cited the lost U.S. investments in Venezuela when asked about his newest tactic in a pressure campaign against Maduro, suggesting the Republican administration's moves are at least somewhat motivated by disputes over oil investments, along with accusations of drug trafficking. Some sanctioned tankers already are diverting away from Venezuela. U.S. oil companies dominated Venezuela's petroleum industry until the country's leaders moved to nationalize the sector, first in the 1970s and again in the 21st century under Maduro and his predecessor, Hugo Chávez. Compensation offered by Venezuela was deemed insufficient, and in 2014, an international arbitration panel ordered the country's socialist government to pay \$1.6 billion to ExxonMobil.

Maduro said in a message Sunday on Telegram that Venezuela has spent months "denouncing, challenging and defeating a campaign of aggression that goes from psychological terrorism to corsairs attacking oil tankers." He added: "We are ready to accelerate the pace of our deep revolution!" The targeting of tankers comes as Trump has ordered the Defense Department to carry out a series of attacks on vessels in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific Ocean that his administration alleges are smuggling fentanyl and other illegal drugs into the United States and beyond. At least 104 people have been killed in 28 known strikes since early September. The strikes have faced scrutiny from U.S. lawmakers and human rights activists, who say the administration has offered scant evidence that its targets are indeed drug smugglers and that the fatal strikes amount to extrajudicial killings. Trump has repeatedly said Maduro's days in power are numbered. White House chief of staff Susie Wiles said in an interview with Vanity Fair published last week that Trump "wants to keep on blowing boats up until Maduro cries uncle." Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., told NBC's "Meet the Press" on Sunday that Trump's use of military to mount pressure on Maduro runs contrary to Trump's pledge to keep the United States out of unnecessary wars. Democrats have been pressing Trump to seek congressional authorization for the military action in the Caribbean. "We should be using sanctions and other tools at our disposal to punish this dictator who is violating the human rights of his civilians and has run the Venezuelan economy into the ground," Kaine said. "But I'll tell you, we should not be waging war against Venezuela. We definitely should not be waging war without a vote of Congress."

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Top Trump administration official defends partial release of Epstein files as Democrats cry foul

By AAMER MADHANI AND
ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON
Associated Press
WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)

— Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche on Sunday defended the Justice Department's decision to release just a fraction of the Jeffrey Epstein files by the congressionally mandated deadline as necessary to protect survivors of sexual abuse by the disgraced financier.

Blanche pledged that the Trump administration eventually would meet its obligation required by law. But he stressed that the department was obligated to act with caution as it goes about making public thousands of documents that can include sensitive information.

Friday's partial release of the Epstein files has led to a new crush of criticism from Democrats who have accused the Republican administration of trying to hide information. Blanche called that pushback disingenuous as President Donald Trump's administration continues to struggle with calls for greater transparency, including from members of his political base, about the government's investigations into Epstein, who once counted Trump as well as several political leaders and business titans among his peers.

"The reason why we are still reviewing documents and still continuing our process



Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche speaks during an event with President Donald Trump in the Oval Office at the White House, Oct. 15, 2025, in Washington.

is simply that to protect victims," Blanche told NBC's "Meet the Press." "So the same individuals that are out there complaining about the lack of documents that were produced on Friday are the same individuals who apparently don't want us to protect victims."

Blanche's comments were the most extensive by the administration since the file dump, which included photographs, interview transcripts, call logs, court records and other documents. But some of the most consequential records expected about Epstein were

nowhere to be found, such as FBI interviews with survivors and internal Justice Department memos examining charging decisions. Those records could help explain how investigators viewed the case and why Epstein was allowed in 2008 to plead guilty to a relatively minor state-level prostitution charge.

Trump, who was friends with Epstein for years before the two had a falling-out, tried for months to keep the records sealed. Though Trump has not been accused of wrongdoing in connection with Epstein, he has argued

there is nothing to see in the files and that the public should focus on other issues. Federal prosecutors in New York brought sex trafficking charges against Epstein in 2019, but he killed himself in jail after his arrest.

Democrat see a cover-up, not an effort to protect victims

But Democratic lawmakers on Sunday hammered Trump and the Justice Department for a partial release.

Rep. Jamie Raskin, D-Md., argued that the Justice Department is obstructing the implementation of the law mandating the release of

the documents not because it wants to protect the Epstein victims.

"It's all about covering up things that, for whatever reason, Donald Trump doesn't want to go public, either about himself, other members of his family, friends, Jeffrey Epstein, or just the social, business, cultural network that he was involved in for at least a decade, if not longer," he said on CNN's "State of the Union."

Blanche also defended the department's decision to remove several files related to the case from its public webpage, including a photograph showing Trump, less than a day after they were posted.

The missing files, which were available Friday but no longer accessible by Saturday, included images of paintings depicting nude women, and one showed a series of photographs along a credenza and in drawers. In that image, inside a drawer among other photos, was a photograph of Trump, alongside Epstein, Melania Trump and Epstein's longtime associate, Ghislaine Maxwell.

Blanche said the documents were removed because they also showed victims of Epstein.

Blanche said that Trump photo and the other documents will be reposted once redactions are made to protect survivors. □

Trump endorses county executive for N.Y. governor, days after longtime ally Stefanik suspends campaign

By AAMER MADHANI
Associated Press
WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)

— President Donald Trump on Saturday announced he's endorsing Nassau County's Republican executive for governor in next fall's New York race, just a day after the president's longtime ally Rep. Elise Stefanik announced she was suspending her candidacy. The endorsement, while not unexpected, could help ensure that Bruce

Blakeman, who leads the suburban county on Long Island, doesn't face a serious contender in his push to win the GOP primary and a chance at a likely faceoff against incumbent Democratic Gov. Kathy Hochul. "Bruce is MAGA all the way, and has been with me from the very beginning," Trump said in a post announcing the endorsement on his Truth Social platform. Stefanik announced Friday that she is suspending her

campaign for governor and will not seek reelection to Congress.

The race between Stefanik and Blake had been expected to be competitive. Stefanik in announcing her decision said she wanted to avoid an "unnecessary and protracted Republican primary."

Stefanik has been a steadfast ally of Trump, who nominated her to serve as his ambassador to the United Nations only to withdraw



Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman, at podium, speaks during a news conference in Mineola, N.Y., March 6, 2024.

Associated Press

it because of concerns about potentially further eroding the GOP's narrow majority in the House.

Stefanik announced her decision just days after Blakeman formally announced his candidacy. □

Luigi Mangione's lawyers say Bondi's death penalty decision was tainted by conflict of interest

By **MICHAEL R. SISK**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Luigi Mangione's lawyers contend that Attorney General Pam Bondi's decision to seek the death penalty against him in the killing of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson was tainted by her prior work as a lobbyist at a firm that represented the insurer's parent company.

Bondi was a partner at Ballard Partners before leading the Justice Department's charge to turn Mangione's federal prosecution into a capital case, creating a "profound conflict of interest" that violated his due process rights, his lawyers wrote in a court filing late Friday. They want prosecutors barred from seeking the death penalty and some charges thrown out. A hearing is scheduled for Jan. 9. By involving herself in the death penalty decision and making public statements suggesting that Mangione deserves execution, Bondi broke a vow she made before taking office in February that she would follow ethical regulations and bow out of matters pertaining to Ballard clients for a year, Mangione's lawyers said.

They argued Bondi has continued to profit from her work for Ballard — and, indirectly, from its work for UnitedHealth Group — through a



Luigi Mangione appears in Manhattan Criminal Court for an evidence hearing, Thursday, Dec. 18, 2025, in New York.

profit-sharing arrangement with the lobbying firm and a defined contribution plan it administers.

The "very person" empowered to seek Mangione's death "has a financial stake in the case she is prosecuting," his lawyers wrote. Her conflict of interest "should have caused her to recuse herself from making any decisions on this case," they added. Messages seeking comment were left for the Justice Department and Ballard Partners.

Bondi announced in April that she was directing Man-

hattan federal prosecutors to seek the death penalty, declaring even before Mangione was formally indicted that capital punishment was warranted for a "premeditated, cold-blooded assassination that shocked America." Thompson, 50, was killed Dec. 4, 2024, as he walked to a Manhattan hotel for UnitedHealth Group's annual investor conference. Surveillance video showed a masked gunman shooting him from behind. Police say "delay," "deny" and "depose" were written on the ammunition, mimicking a phrase

used to describe how insurers avoid paying claims.

Mangione, 27, the Ivy League-educated scion of a wealthy Maryland family, was arrested five days later at a McDonald's in Altoona, Pennsylvania, about 230 miles (about 370 kilometers) west of Manhattan. He has pleaded not guilty to federal and state murder charges. The state charges carry the possibility of life in prison. Neither trial has been scheduled.

Friday's filing put the focus back on Mangione's federal case a day after a marathon

pretrial hearing ended in his fight to bar prosecutors in his state case from using certain evidence found during his arrest, such as a gun that police said matched the one used to kill Thompson and a notebook in which he purportedly described his intent to "wack" a health insurance executive. A ruling isn't expected until May.

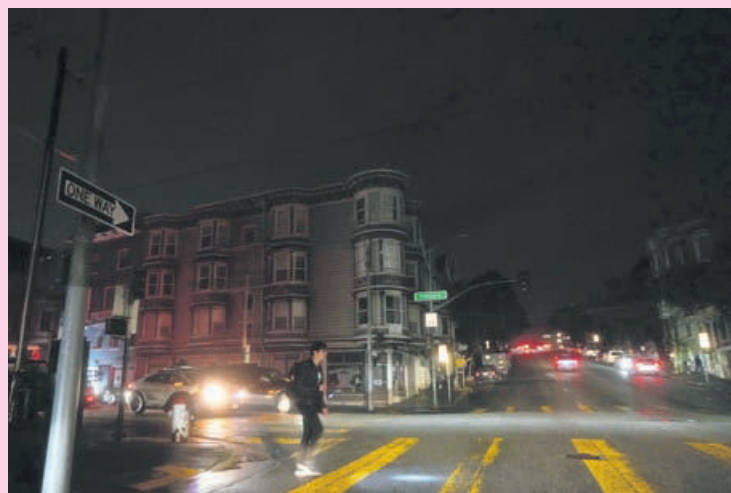
In a September court filing, Mangione's lawyers argued that Bondi's announcement that she was ordering prosecutors to seek the death penalty — which she followed with Instagram posts and a TV appearance — showed the decision was "based on politics, not merit."

They also said her remarks tainted the grand jury process that resulted in his indictment a few weeks later. Bondi's statements and other official actions — including a highly choreographed perp walk that saw Mangione led up a Manhattan pier by armed officers, and the Trump administration's flouting of established death penalty procedures — "have violated Mr. Mangione's constitutional and statutory rights and have fatally prejudiced this death penalty case," his lawyers said.

In a court filing last month, federal prosecutors argued that "pretrial publicity, even when intense, is not itself a constitutional defect." □

Associated Press

Power restored to most in San Francisco after massive outage



A pedestrian uses a flash light while crossing an intersection as power outages darken the streets, in San Francisco, Saturday, Dec. 20, 2025.

Associated Press

By **JAIMIE DING** and **SUSAN HAIGH**
Associated Press

Power was restored Sunday morning to the bulk of the 130,000 homes and

businesses in San Francisco impacted by a massive outage a day earlier that caused major disruptions in the city.

The Pacific Gas and Electric Co.'s outage map showed more than 16,000 customers remained without power as of 12 p.m. PST. PG&E said earlier its crews were working Sunday to restore electricity in several neighborhoods and small areas of downtown San Francisco following Saturday's outage.

PG&E said it could not provide a precise timeframe for when the power would be fully restored.

"The damage from the fire

in our substation was significant and extensive, and the repairs and safe restoration will be complex," the utility said, referring to the substation at 8th and Mission streets. That fire has been blamed for some of the blackouts. The outage remains under investigation.

PG&E said it has mobilized additional engineers and electricians to help with restoration efforts.

"This is a very complex work plan and will require the highest amount of safety focus to ensure safe work actions," PG&E said. No injuries have been reported. The outage, which oc-

curred shortly after 1 p.m. on Saturday, left a large swath of the northern part of the city without power that began to grow in size. At its peak, the outage represented roughly one-third of the utility company's customers in the city.

At about 4 p.m. on Saturday, PG&E posted on X that it had stabilized the grid and no further outages were expected.

Social media posts and local media reported mass closures of restaurants and shops and darkened street lights and Christmas decorations on Saturday, one of the busiest shopping days of the year. □

Israel's Cabinet approves 19 new Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank

By MELANIE LIDMAN

Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Israel's Cabinet has approved a proposal for 19 new Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank, the far-right finance minister said Sunday, as the government pushes ahead with a construction binge in the territory that further threatens the possibility of a Palestinian state.

That brings the total number of new settlements over the past few years to 69, a new record, according to Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, who has pushed a settlement expansion agenda in the West Bank. The latest ones include two that were previously evacuated during a 2005 disengagement plan.

The approval increases the number of settlements in the West Bank by nearly 50% during the current far-right government's tenure. In 2022, there were 141 settlements across the West Bank. After the latest approval, there are 210, according to Peace Now, an anti-settlement watchdog group.

Settlements are widely considered illegal under international law. Smotrich's office said the Cabinet approval came on Dec. 11 and that the development had been classified until now.

Settlements are the latest blow to Palestinian state. The approval comes as the



Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, left, leads a Christmas Eve Mass at the Holy Family Catholic Church in Gaza City, Sunday, Dec. 21, 2025.

Associated Press

U.S. pushes Israel and Hamas to move ahead with the second phase of the Gaza ceasefire, which took effect Oct. 10. The U.S.-brokered plan calls for a possible "pathway" to a Palestinian state, something the settlements are aimed at preventing.

The Cabinet decision included a retroactive legalization of some previously established settlement outposts or neighborhoods of existing settlements, and the creation of settlements on land where Palestinians were evacuated, the Finance Ministry said. Settlements can range in size from a single dwelling to a collec-

tion of high-rises.

The ministry said two of the settlements legalized in the latest approval are Kadim and Ganim, which were two of the four West Bank settlements dismantled in 2005, as part of Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. There have been multiple attempts to resettle them after Israel's government in March 2023 repealed a 2005 act that evacuated the four outposts and barred Israelis from reentering the areas. Israel captured the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza — areas claimed by the Palestinians for a future state — in the 1967 war. It has settled over 500,000 Jews in

the West Bank, in addition to over 200,000 in contested east Jerusalem.

Israel's government is dominated by far-right proponents of the settler movement, including Smotrich and Cabinet Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, who oversees the nation's police force.

Settler expansion has been compounded by a surge of attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank in recent months.

During October's olive harvest, settlers across the territory launched an average of eight attacks daily, the most since the United Nations humanitarian office began collecting data in

2006. The attacks continued in November, with the U.N. recording at least 136 more by Nov. 24.

Settlers burned cars, desecrated mosques, ransacked industrial plants and destroyed cropland. Israeli authorities have done little beyond issuing occasional condemnations of the violence.

2 Palestinians killed in West Bank clashes, ministry says. The Palestinian Health Ministry in Ramallah said two Palestinians, including a 16-year-old, were killed in clashes with Israel's military on Saturday night in the northern part of the West Bank.

Israel's military said a militant was shot and killed after he threw a block at troops in Qabatiya, and another militant was killed after he hurled explosives at troops operating in the town of Silat al-Harithiya.

The Palestinian Health Ministry identified the Palestinian killed in Qabatiya as 16-year-old Rayan Abu Muallah. Palestinian media aired brief security footage of the incident, where the youth appears to emerge from an alley and is shot by troops as he approaches them without throwing anything. Israel's military said the incident is under review.

The Health Ministry identified the second man as Ahmad Ziyoud, 22. □

Thousands cheer as the sun rises on winter solstice at Stonehenge

LONDON (AP) — Thousands of people cheered and danced around Stonehenge as the sun rose over the prehistoric stone circle on Sunday, the winter solstice.

The crowds, many dressed as druids and pagans, had gathered before dawn, waiting patiently in the dark and cold field in southwest England. Some sang and beat drums, while others took time to reflect among the huge stone pillars.

Many make the pilgrimage to the stone circle every summer and winter and consider it a spiritual experience. The ancient monument, erected between 5,000 and 3,500 years ago, was built to align with the movement of the sun on the solstices — key dates in the calendar for ancient farmers. English Heritage, the organization

that manages Stonehenge, said some 8,500 people celebrated Saturday at the monument on Salisbury Plain, about 75 miles (120 kilometers) southwest of London. It added that its livestream of the festivities drew over 242,000 views from around the world. Sunday is the shortest day of the year north of the equator, where the solstice marks the start of astronomical winter. It's the opposite in the Southern Hemisphere, where it is the longest day of the year and summer will start.

The winter solstice is when the sun makes its shortest, lowest arc, but many celebrate it as a time of renewal because after Sunday, the sun starts climbing again and days will get a little longer every day until late June. □



People celebrate the Winter Solstice sunrise celebrations at Stonehenge, a world-famous prehistoric monument on Salisbury Plain, England, Sunday, Dec. 21, 2025.

Associated Press

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Saudi Arabia quietly expands access to its only alcohol store for non-Muslim residents

By BARAA ANWER
Associated Press

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP)

— Saudi Arabia has quietly expanded access to its only store that sells alcohol, allowing wealthy foreign residents to buy booze in the latest step in the once-ultraconservative kingdom's experiment in liberalization. There's been no official announcement of the decision, but word has gotten out, and long lines of cars and people can now be seen at the discreet, unmarked store in the Diplomatic Quarter of the Saudi capital, Riyadh.

The store opened in January 2024 for non-Muslim diplomats. The new rules allow non-Muslim foreigners who hold Premium Residency to buy. The residency permit goes to foreigners with specialized skills, investors and entrepreneurs.

Saudi Arabia, home to the holiest sites in Islam, has banned alcohol since the early 1950s. The store is widely seen as a way to cautiously test the controlled sale of alcohol.

Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mo-



Festivalgoers gather near food and beverage stands, including a booth serving nonalcoholic beer, during the Soundstorm music festival in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Thursday, Dec. 11, 2025.

Associated Press

ammed bin Salman, and his father, King Salman, have pursued a dramatic liberalization policy in the kingdom, aiming to attract tourism, boost international business and reduce economic dependence on crude oil.

The kingdom, which adheres to Islamic Sharia law, has opened movie

theaters, allowed women to drive and hosted major music festivals. But political speech and dissent remain strictly criminalized, potentially at the penalty of death.

Alcohol remains banned for the general public.

The unmarked store resembles a duty-free shop. Its ownership remains officially

undisclosed.

Security is strict. Every visitor is subject to eligibility checks and frisking before entry. Phones and cameras are banned inside, and staff even inspect eyewear for smart glasses.

The Associated Press spoke to several customers leaving the store. They spoke on condition of anonymity be-

cause of the stigma around alcohol.

Prices are sharply elevated, they said. Diplomats are exempt from taxes on their purchases, but Premium Residency holders are not. The customers described the store as relatively well-stocked, though some said the selection of beer and wine was limited.

The Premium Residency permit was created as part of the kingdom's drive to attract global expertise. Unlike other residencies, it doesn't require a Saudi sponsor, and it offers benefits including the right to own property, start a business and sponsor family. It requires high incomes or large investments to qualify. Saudis and other residents who want a drink often travel to the neighboring island of Bahrain, where alcohol is legally available to Muslims and non-Muslims. On weekends and holidays, the island sees an influx of visitors from Saudi Arabia and across the Gulf, making it a popular getaway. The more expensive option is to go to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. □



South African police gather at the scene of a mass shooting where gunmen killed nine and injured at least 10 in a pub in Bekkersdal, South Africa, Sunday, Dec. 21, 2025.

Associated Press

By MICHELLE GUMEDE and ALFONSO NQUNJANA
Associated Press

BEKKERSDAL, South Africa (AP) — Nine people have died and at least 10 oth-

Multiple gunmen open fire at a South African pub, killing 9 and wounding 10

ers were wounded after a group of gunmen carried out a shooting at a South African pub during the early hours of Sunday, authorities said. The incident occurred just before 1 a.m. in the township of Bekkersdal which is located 46 kilometers (28 miles) west of Johannesburg. It is the second mass shooting in South Africa in three weeks.

About 12 unknown suspects in a white minibus and a sil-

ver sedan opened fire at pub patrons at KwaNoxolo tavern, in the Tambo section of Bekkersdal and continued to shoot randomly as they fled the scene, according to police.

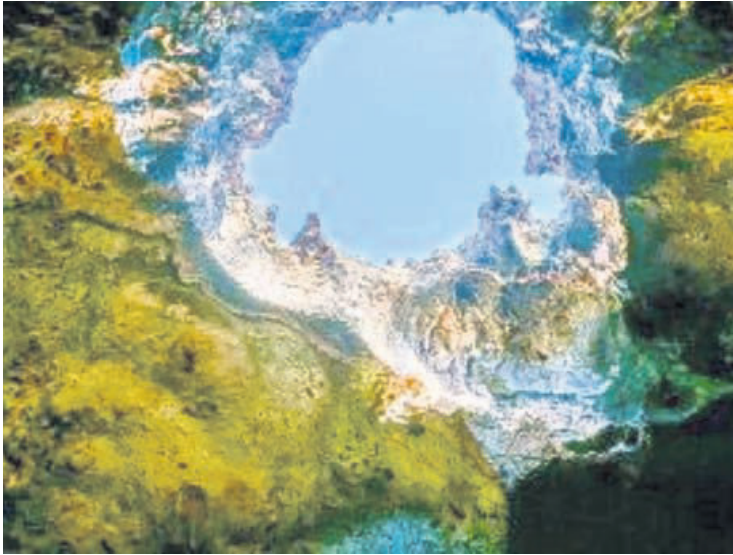
"Some victims were randomly shot in the streets by unknown gunmen," the police said of the incident that left nine people dead and 10 hospitalized.

Maj. Gen. Fred Kekana, the acting provincial commis-

sioner of Gauteng, told the AP at the scene that the gunmen, some of whom wore balaclavas, had one AK-47 rifle and several 9-millimeter pistols.

Police did not release information about the victims, but police spokesperson Brigadier Brenda Muridili confirmed that an e-hailing driver was among those caught in the crossfire. She said the driver had just dropped off a client. □

Explore Aruba!



(ORANJESTAD)—Aruba Today collected some things to do BEYOND the beach. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But we are also blessed with some of the warmest people in the world and our island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles across, with a total area of 70 square miles. Bit more to discover than the white stretch on the coastline we say. Let's mention some of these hidden gems.

Arikok National Park

The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots. If you are not up to walking,

you can drive through the park, one way or another this park is a great place to spend an entire day. Cruising through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In total, the park consists of 34 square kilometers of protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whip-tail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle snake (cascabel) are just some of them, you can also admire these close in the park's Visitors' Center. For more information, visit the website www.acf.aw

Natural Bridge

One of Aruba's favorite tourist attractions is the Natural Bridge. For thousands of years, pounding waves and strong winds have slowly chiseled away the limestone cliffs along Aruba's north coast to create several natural bridges. The largest of these bridges

used to be the famous Natural Bridge. The bridge was a formation of coral limestone cut out by years of pounding surf, and was one of the largest of these types of spans in the world. It stood some 23 feet (7 meters) above sea level and spans more than 100 feet (30 meters). Unfortunately the bridge collapsed on September 2, 2005. Despite this, it is still the most photographed natural bridge and it remains a popular tourist attraction in Aruba, with the adjacent and intact Baby Bridge also meriting a visit. The Natural Bridge is the perfect stop while touring Aruba. There is no admission fee or set hours for visiting. Quench your thirst with refreshing beverages & refuel your tank with local snacks.



The Lourdes Grotto

Named in commemoration of the famous French religious landmark, was created under the guidance of a priest named "Erkamp" and parishioners in the year 1958. The grotto, a shrine built into the rocks is located in Seroe Preto, just off the main road to San Nicolas. A statue of the Virgin Mary, weighing 700 kilos,

was hoisted into place in the grotto. Every year, on February 11 (feast of Lady of Lourdes), a procession leaves from the St. Theresia church in San Nicolas to the grotto, where a mass is performed.

The grotto is located roadside and can be visited daily. Just make sure you park safely in the event you wish to stop for pictures at this location. □



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How Aruban beaches came to be!

(Oranjestad)—We've talked about the best beaches to visit on the island before, but have you ever wondered how Aruba got its white, sandy beaches, and why there's a clear difference between the northern and southern shores? Here are some fun facts about the development of Aruban beaches. How did Aruba get its white, sandy beaches?

Aruba's beaches have developed over the span of thousands of years. Waves crashing on the rocky formations along our coast line (which consists mainly of coral reefs) have started to wear and tear the reefs over time, resulting in its gradual breakdown. Fish that feed off corals also contribute to this—one small bite at a time. Over the course of thousands of years, as waves continue

to crash and fish continue to eat off the corals, sand starts to accumulate around the area. However, whether the sand stays there is another question to be answered, and this is where we highlight the biggest difference between the northern and southern coast of the island. The sand that accumulates around a torn coral reef is swept away along with the debris by the ocean stream. However, in areas where it's shallow and the stream is

weaker, the sand tends to stick to the bottom faster. This is why the beaches in the south—the areas with weaker stream and shallower ocean floors—has sand that stretches for miles. In contrast, the northern area, where the stream is much stronger and the ocean floor is much deeper, there is no sand present—they were swept away with the current!

Aruba is a continental island. The island actually forms part of South America, and the space between Aruba and the South American continent is simply referred to as land that runs under the ocean. This is why it gets gradually deeper in the south, whereas the ocean floor in the north runs steeply to the bottom. □

Source: archival document provided by the National Archive of Aruba (ANA).

Why is the north deep, but the south shallow?

Aruba to me



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Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Michael and Ann Troccoli from North Providence, RI

They wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is..home From our 1st trip in 1991 up until now, we come every year for 2 weeks to see all of our family and friends in Aruba and made new friends from all around the world who come the same weeks as us. I count the days until my return every year We love Aruba."

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □

Holiday Shopping at Paseo Herencia



Paseo Herencia presents a captivating selection of stores perfect for every taste, from beachwear and apparel to fragrances, footwear, jewelry, keepsakes, and more. This holiday season, discover the perfect gifts for everyone on your list! Treat loved ones to timeless pieces from iconic brands like Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Aldo, Carmen Steffens, Psycho Bunny, and Pan-



dora.

Get party ready at Maggy's, with expert hair and makeup services plus curated beauty products for festive events. For those who appreciate natural treasures, Aruba Aloe offers unique, handcrafted holiday edition gifts made from pure, natural ingredients.

A Festive Feast at Paseo Herencia

Embark on a global culinary journey at Paseo Herencia this holiday season, where every meal feels like a celebration. Savor the vibrant flavors of Iguana Cantina's Mexican cuisine, enjoy the Spanish elegance of Xixon Spanish Res-



taurant, or indulge in creative sushi at Fusion Cuisine. Relish grilled favorites at Skewers Grill, the cozy comfort of The Lazy Turtle, or the seafood sensations at Sexy Shrimps Bar.

Enjoy Napoletana style pizza and happy hour moments at Che Bar, ideal for casual gatherings. For a taste of Europe, Pomm's Frites offers Dutch delicacies perfect for the season, while Starbucks brings the familiar warmth of seasonal drinks and treats.

VIP Cinema

Indulge in an unparalleled cinematic experience at Caribbean Cinemas VIP, nestled on Paseo Herencia's second floor. Relax in supremely comfortable reclining seats while enjoying movies on high-quality screens with state-of-the-art projection and 7.1 Dolby surround sound. Don't forget to relish the delectable buttery popcorn.

Holiday Entertainment at Paseo Herencia

Paseo Herencia comes alive this holiday season with festive entertainment and sparkling decorations. Enjoy live performances on the center stage from Monday to Friday at 8 pm,



featuring Christmas themed shows with seasonal music and cheer. Don't miss the nightly watershows at 7:30 pm, 8:30 pm, and 9:30 pm, now enhanced with surrounding twinkling holiday lights.

Thrill seekers can explore the Airsoft experience behind The Lazy Turtle, while festive displays including Christmas trees and ornament installations create perfect photo opportunities throughout the plaza.

Little ones can join in the holiday fun with the Kid's Carousel and train ride from 6 pm to 10 pm, now sprinkled with festive magic.

Parking at Paseo Herencia is complimentary for up to two hours when shopping, dining, or enjoying a movie. Simply present your purchase receipt to the parking cashier. For details on specials and events, visit the Paseo Herencia Events website at <https://www.paseoevents.com>. For more information on stores, the loyalty program, or other inquiries, please visit the Paseo Herencia website at <https://www.paseoherencia.com/shopping/>

A brief history of the California Light House



(Oranjestad)—At the furthest western point of the island, there lies the tallest structure on the island: The California Light House. Standing on top of a limestone cliff, this lighthouse oversees the entire island, offering one of few best views of the island and the surrounding sea. It is also one of the few monuments that hold a rich history.

The lighthouse was constructed in between 1914-1916, and its first keeper was a young trained lighthouse keeper from Curaçao names Jacob Jacobs. Mr. Frederico Fingal was the last man to have occupied this position until 1962. Though his son, Mr. Romulo Fingal did not continue in his father's footsteps, he does have a special connection to the lighthouse. He sat down with our reporter and shared a bit of its history.

As Mr. Fingal explains, "In 1915, cargo donkeys were hired from Figaroa di Noord to help build the Lighthouse at Westpunt. The donkeys had to walk along the beach all the way to

Westpunt carrying the cargo, poles, cement, and all these things. At that time, it was a difficult task until Aruba got its first truck.

These things reflect how people could have accomplished this tremendous job with so little." Mr. Fingal said, "At that time, it wasn't a place for people to work. It was very challenging because it was full of goats and donkeys, and it was very isolated. There were no hotels or roads to get there. There was only a donkey trail. Those were the only means of transportation."

Mr. Fingal continues, "In 1939, I was born in the lighthouse, and my father was the last lighthouse keeper until he retired in 1962. After that, they removed the power cables all the way to the top. According to the story, we couldn't have the light ourselves because they dismantled it, and after many years, I heard that it is in a train museum in San Nicolas, where we found this very special lens that, when the light shines through it, it reaches 30 ki-

lometers out to sea." Mr. Fingal told our reporter.

The lighthouse has a long and very interesting history. The reason why the lighthouse was built, according to Mr. Fingal, dates back to the day when the cargo ship S.S. California sank because of the lack of light. In 1913, Aruba made a request to Curaçao to build a Lighthouse at Westpunt, and the governor of Curaçao responded to Aruba to come back in 1915 with a well-detailed plan. "During the First World War from 1914 to 1918, they had to wait for the light to be transported to Aruba because it was manufactured in France. At that time, there was no electricity, and the light was very interesting because it rotated with a kerosene lamp that planes used; clean kerosene," Mr. Fingal said.

Mr. Fingal discovered something very interesting about the lighthouse after much research was documented in his book 'History of the Lighthouse at Westpunt.' He found many details: "I found out that the

height of the lighthouse was due to the absence of electricity. There was also the presence of coral. There is a long steel cable from where the light is, and under the light, at the highest point, there is a hanging weight, a sort of pendulum that swings like that, with a weight that measures about 1 meter by 30 centimeters wide, which is a block of solid iron attached to a cable. When you release it upwards, it comes down, and the weight that comes down pulls it up, gradually. And while it comes down, the same weight that is descending causes many small wheels to turn in the opposite direction. The Lighthouse rotates from 6 pm in the evening, when the sun sets, until 6 am in the morning. During the entire night, the light shines on the lantern, it goes down 24 meters, and the Lighthouse is 30 meters high. It is designed not to collapse," Mr. Fingal explains.

Mr. Fingal further explains that in one night, the lighthouse rotates 4,320 times and consumes one gallon



of kerosene for the whole operation. "At that time, the kerosene was supplied from the Lago refinery. Every day it was brought down, and to start the light again, they had to lift the weight up, so our job as children was to crank it and raise the weight back up in the evening when the light stuck, they would take it down again, and the light stayed down. That's how it worked for a very long time," Mr. Fingal explains.

Thanks to the Monument Fund Aruba, which worked hard and is currently in charge of the Lighthouse, Mr. Fingal is very happy with its preservation, along with all the renovations that have taken place. He hopes that the story of the lighthouse will continue to live on for future generations. □

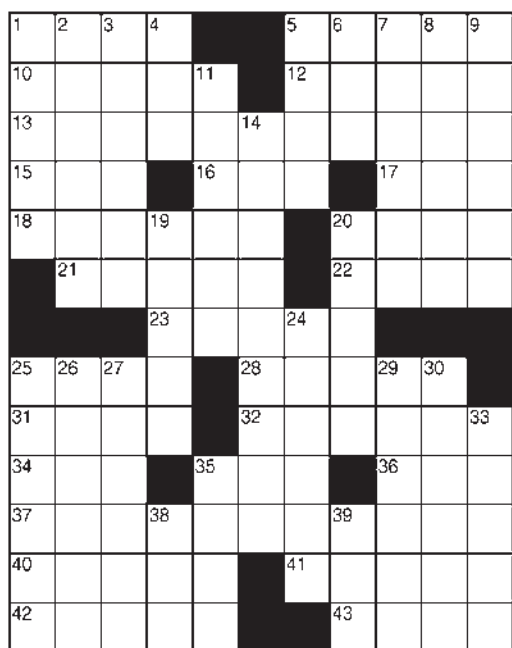
CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS** 40 Show
- 1 Stew meat gratitude
- 5 Sun-dried to
- brick 41 Happen-
- 10 Fiery ing
- crime 42 Employs
- 12 Made well 43 Fine study
- 13 Spy
- writings
- 15 Green
- prefix
- 16 "Shoo!"
- 17 Summer, in Paris
- 18 Brook
- 20 Ref's
- decision
- 21 Country division
- 22 Pub
- pints
- 23 News
- summary
- 25 School
- near Windsor
- 28 Musical drama
- 31 Supplies with staff
- 32 Not round-about
- 34 Diner
- dessert
- 35 Casual shirt
- 36 High card
- 37 They're typed on entry keypads

DOWN

- 1 Diamond corners
- 2 Builds
- 3 Chap-erone
- 4 Gift tag word
- 5 Bank
- statement no.
- 6 Couple
- 7 Severe trial
- 8 Firefly, for one
- 9 Old autos
- 11 Make void
- 14 Video editing aids
- 19 Brings in
- 20 Criminal outing
- 24 For each
- 25 Person who can read emotions
- 26 Meditative martial art
- 27 Like some garages
- 29 Book lover
- 30 Stress
- 33 Exams
- 35 Chiding sounds
- 38 Hydro-carbon suffix
- 39 Future embryos



1-3

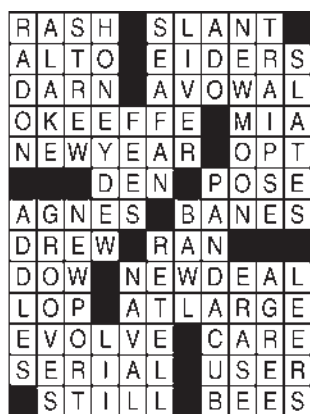
AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

1-3 CRYPTOQUOTE

AGXVX IVX ABP BIWK PC
KZVXIJLDF RLFGA: AP TX
AGX SIDJRX PV AGX ULVVPV
AGIA VXCRRSAK LA. — XJLAG
BGIVAPD

Cryptoquote: MY WISH FOR YOU,
SWEET HAPPY LIFE/MAY ALL YOUR SORROWS
BE GONE AND YOUR HEART BEGIN TO SING! —
PEGGY LEE



Cruise ship Schedule: Dec. 19 - 24 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
FRI	19	CORAL PRINCESS	07.00	16.00	B	1
		MS RENAISSANCE	09.00	18.00	C	1
		WIND SPIRIT	12.01	****	G	1
SAT	20	ZUIDERDAM	07.00	16.00	B	1
		AIDAPERLA	09.00	22.00	C	1
		WIND SPIRIT - Dept.	****	19.00	G	
SUN	21	SILVER SHADOW	13.00	****	C	1
		FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-
MON	22	SILVER SHADOW - Dept.	****	18.00	C	
TUE	23	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	B	1
		SEVEN SEAS MARINER	10.00	22.00	C	1
		NORWEGIAN SKY	13.30	20.00	I	1
WED	24	BRITANNIA	07.00	18.00	B	1
		ROTTERDAM	08.00	17.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
		OCEANIA ALLURA	10.00	23.00	I	1

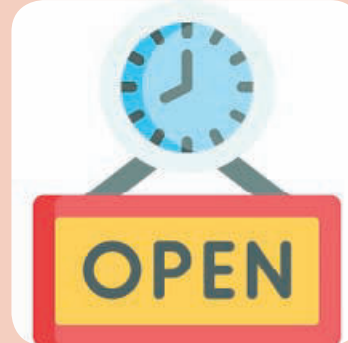
Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 8 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

8	2					5		
	9			7			4	8
		3	8	2			6	1
5						9	6	4
	6	2		1		7		
	4		2	6				5
	1		6				9	
				9	7	4		2
9	5	7		8	2	1		6

Difficulty: ★

12/22

Answer to previous puzzle

4	6	1	7	2	9	3	5	8
9	8	7	1	5	3	2	4	6
3	2	5	6	8	4	9	1	7
8	1	9	5	4	6	7	3	2
6	5	3	2	9	7	4	8	1
2	7	4	8	3	1	6	9	5
7	9	6	3	1	8	5	2	4
5	3	8	4	6	2	1	7	9
1	4	2	9	7	5	8	6	3

Difficulty: ★★★★★

12/21

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NORAD continues decades-long tradition of tracking Santa's trip around the world



Volunteers take phone calls from children asking where Santa is and when he will deliver presents to their house, during the annual NORAD Tracks Santa Operation, at the North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD, at Peterson Air Force Base, in Colorado Springs, Colo., on Tuesday, Dec. 24, 2024.

Associated Press

By COLLEEN SLEVIN

Associated Press

PETERSON SPACE FORCE BASE, Colo. (AP) — Sometimes kids drop the phone after hearing Santa won't show up if they're not asleep. Others who call the NORAD Tracks Santa hotline wonder if St. Nick will be able to find them.

Adults who also remain devoted to the jolly figure said to deliver presents around the world are checking up on his journey. For 70 years, that's been the tradition at the North American Aerospace Defense Command — a joint United States and Canadian operation charged with monitoring the skies for threats since the Cold War.

More than 1,000 volunteers will be taking calls to 1-877-HI-NORAD on Christmas Eve from 4 a.m. to midnight Mountain Standard Time. For the first time this year, Santa seekers can place a call through the program's website, which organizers say will be easier for people outside North America.

The website allows people to follow Santa's journey in nine languages, including English and Japanese.

Last year, about 380,000 calls came into a hangar festooned with Christmas decorations at Peterson Space Force Base in Colorado Springs — the home of NORAD.

While Santa is no threat, the same combination of radar, satellites and jets that help

to her house later that evening," Frushour said.

A special needs man named Henry who calls every year once asked if the jet pilot escorting Santa through North America could put a note in the plane letting Santa know he was in bed and ready for him to come, said Michelle Martin, a NORAD staffer and Marine veteran. She said she explained that Santa travels "faster than starlight."

"I don't know that our pilot can catch up with him fast enough. He just waves and he goes," she recalled saying.

A tradition started by mistake

The tradition started in 1955 when NORAD's predecessor, the Continental Air Defense Command, was on the lookout for any sign of a possible nuclear attack from the then-Soviet Union. NORAD says a child mistakenly called the combat operations center and asked to speak to Santa Claus. The commander on duty, Air Force Col. Harry Shoup didn't want to disappoint the child, so he ordered staffers to start tracking Santa and take calls from children.

The story goes that the first phone call was either the result of a misprint or a misdial of a number included in a Sears advertisement in the Colorado Springs newspaper encouraging children

to call Santa.

The legend developed into the first call coming into a dedicated hotline that connected the command with a general in case of an attack. In 2015, The Atlantic magazine doubted the flood of calls to the secret line, saying a call to a public phone line was more probable and noting that Shoup had a flair for public relations.

In a 1999 interview with The Associated Press, Shoup recalled playing along once he figured out what was happening, telling the first caller, "Ho, ho, ho, I am Santa."

"The crew was looking at me like I had lost it," he recalled. He said he told his staff what was happening and told them to play along, too. It's not clear what day the first call came in, but by Dec. 23 of that first year, The Associated Press reported that CONAD was tracking Santa. □



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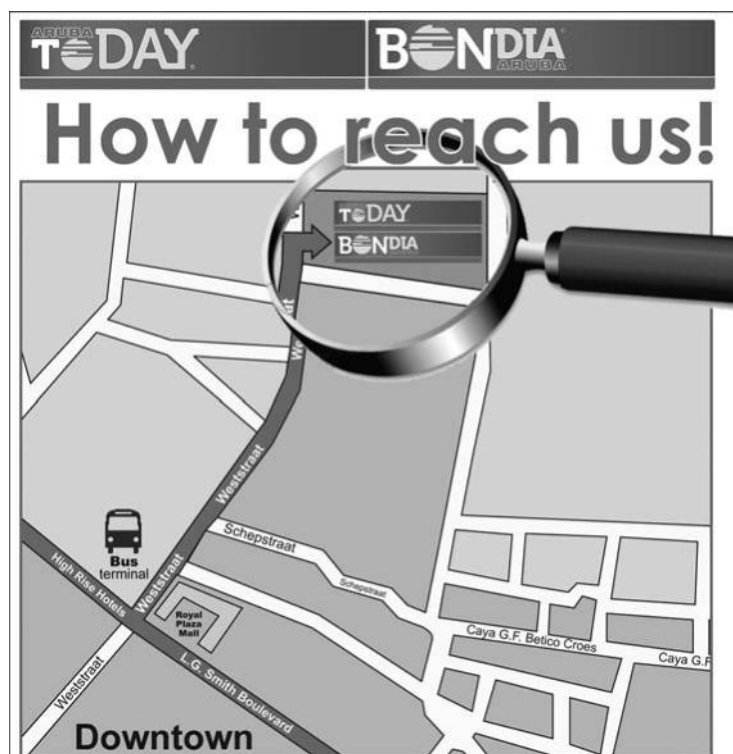
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HEALTH

DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:

Trupiaal: Tel. 583 8560

San Nicolas:

Seroe Preto: Tel. 584 4833

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850

Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002

Urgent Care 586 0448

Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank
Tel. 588 0002
FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989
Fundacion Contra Violencia
Relacional Tel. 583 5400
Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888
Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433
Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Justin Herbert keeps Chargers rolling toward playoffs with 34-17 win over Cowboys

By SCHUYLER DIXON
AP Pro Football Writer

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) —

Justin Herbert is getting more comfortable by the week with his broken left hand that's heavily protected.

Facing a beleaguered defense that isn't getting the quarterback on the ground sure helps.

Herbert threw two touchdown passes and ran for a score and the Los Angeles Chargers closed in on a playoff spot with a 34-17 victory over the Dallas Cowboys on Sunday.

The Chargers' fourth consecutive victory gave them a chance later in the day to clinch their second post-season berth in two seasons under coach Jim Harbaugh. Los Angeles (11-4) would be in with a loss or tie by either Indianapolis or Houston.

"I think the really cool thing about this team is, we've kind of taken it week by week, and we're never looking too far ahead, and we're never looking too far back," Herbert said. "In the past couple of weeks, I think the defense has done such a great job of just helping us out. And today we were able to kind of help out a little bit."

Dak Prescott had TD passes on his first two drives but couldn't find the end zone again for Dallas, which was eliminated from the playoffs for the second year in a row



Los Angeles Chargers quarterback Justin Herbert (10) runs during the second half of an NFL football game against the Dallas Cowboys, Sunday, Dec. 21, 2025, in Arlington, Texas.

Associated Press

with Philadelphia's NFC East-clinching victory at Washington on Saturday.

The Cowboys (6-8-1) have lost three in a row since a three-game winning streak that put them over .500 for the only time in coach Brian Schottenheimer's first season.

"They played a better full game than us," said Prescott, who was 21 of 30 for 244 yards as both QBs went without an interception. "The first half, we're rolling, and we didn't get the stop on defense. The second half, we got the stops on defense and we weren't doing

much."

In his third full game with his left hand completely covered, Herbert led the Chargers to touchdowns on all three drives in the first half. Omarion Hampton scored on a 5-yard run in the second half.

A 23-yard TD toss to Quentin Johnston, who played college football a few miles from the home of the Cowboys at TCU, was followed by 25-yarder to Ladd McCownkey before Herbert's 1-yard plunge on a modified version of the tush push. Johnston had four catches for 104 yards.

Defensive coordinator Matt Eberflus' move to the coaching booth from the sideline didn't help the Dallas defense — or his case to keep this job.

Herbert was 23 of 29 — a season-high 79% — for 300 yards and the Chargers finished with 452 total yards, another season best. They didn't reach 300 yards in the first two full games after Herbert's injury.

"It's getting better," said Herbert, who broke the hand in the first game on the current winning streak. "I think the swelling's going down. I've got much better grip on the

ball now. And so I think every week, every day helps. And just getting used to it and allowing the bone to heal."

Los Angeles punted on the first possession of the second half and was facing third-and-7 on the next drive when Herbert escaped Kenneth Murray's grasp in the backfield and sprinted 33 yards, leading to Cameron Dicker's 27-yard field goal for a 27-17 lead with 9 minutes remaining.

Herbert was slow getting up and appeared to be favoring the injured hand, but said after the game he landed on the elbow. He didn't miss any time.

"He's amazing, his accuracy, his escapability, his ability to throw on the run," said Dallas cornerback Trevon Diggs, who played for the first time since Week 6 after dealing with a concussion and issues with his knees.

"He's got it all."

Dallas went without a sack for the second consecutive week, this time against a makeshift offensive line that has struggled to protect Herbert. He already has a career in sacks, having gone down 49 times.

"We got the ball out quick, had a great protection plan and really were on our stuff this week," Herbert said. "So it's a shoutout to the front five for just communicating, talking and blocking as well as they did." □

Red Wings outlast Capitals 3-2 in OT to sweep home-and-home series



Detroit Red Wings defenseman Moritz Seider (53) is hugged by center Andrew Copp (18) after scoring during overtime to defeat the Washington Capitals in an NHL hockey game Sunday, Dec. 21, 2025, in Detroit.

Associated Press

By DAVE HOGG

Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Moritz Seider scored at 4:36 of overtime and the Detroit Red Wings beat the Washington Capitals 3-2 on Sunday to sweep a home-and-home series.

Detroit won 5-2 in Washington on Saturday. The Red Wings have won seven of their last nine.

After the Capitals killed a penalty early in overtime, Seider ripped a slap shot past Charlie Lindgren late in the extra session.

John Leonard and Lucas Raymond also scored for the Red Wings, and Cam Talbot made 31 saves.

Ethen Frank scored twice for Washington, and Charlie Lindgren stopped 24 shots. The Capitals lost for the fifth time in six games.

Frank opened the scoring with 5:43 left in the first, beating defenseman Albert Johansson down the right wing, then cutting inside to slide the puck through Talbot's legs.

Detroit tied it at 8:37 of the second on Raymond's power-play goal. The Red Wings took a 2-1 lead with 6:14 left in the period when Alex DeBrincat flipped the puck at the net, and it deflected off Leonard's leg and past Lindgren. DeBrincat had an

assist for his 550th NHL point. Frank tied it at 9:38 of the third, scoring his 10th NHL goal with a shot through traffic.

Detroit's Elmer Soderblom left late in the first period after being hit in the face by Washington defenseman Jakob Chychrun's pass. Soderblom was bleeding heavily when assisted off the ice by Detroit trainers, but returned midway through the second period with a full shield.

Up next

Capitals: Host the New York Rangers on Tuesday night. Red Wings: Host Dallas on Tuesday night. □

Masters fields reaches 86 players with 13 from the world ranking

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

Ryan Gerard made his 10,000-mile trip worth the effort Sunday when he was runner-up at the Mauritius Open, good enough for him to join 13 other players who qualified for Masters invitations by finishing the year in the top 50 of the Official World Golf Ranking.

That brings the field to 86 players who are likely to compete — a list that includes Tiger Woods, who has not announced if he is playing — going into the new year.

Players can still earn invitations by winning a PGA Tour event (opposite-field events excluded) or getting into the top 50 a week before the Masters.

While the final world ranking will not be published for another week, there are no other tournaments that affect the top 50 and the OWGR already has projected the top 50. Sam Stevens will finish at No. 50 by a narrow margin over Taylor Pendrith of Canada. Alex Noren at No. 11 is the highest-ranked player who was not already eligible, courtesy of two wins in England, including the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth.

Kristoffer Reitan of Norway (Nedbank Golf Challenge), Michael Kim (French Open), Sami Valimaki of Finland (RSM Classic) and Michael Brennan (Utah Championship) all won tournaments in the fall that helped secure their spots in the world ranking.

The others who will finish in the top 50 are Aaron Rai, Max Greyserman, Rasmus Hojgaard, Min Woo Lee, Si Woo Kim and Johnny Keefer.

Brennan and Keefer present unique cases. Brennan spent most of 2025 on the PGA Tour Americas circuit, two steps down from the PGA Tour. He won three times and had nine other top-10 finishes. And then he received a sponsor exemption to the Bank of Utah Championship and won his first PGA Tour title that moved him into top 50.

Keefer was on the Korn Ferry Tour and won twice, allowing him to break into the top



Ryan Gerard hits from the ninth tee during the first round of the BMW Championship golf tournament, Aug. 14, 2025, in Owings Mills, Md.

Associated Press

50 and narrowly hold down his spot.

The Masters altered its criteria this year, eliminating an invitation to the FedEx Cup Fall events and replacing that with national opens around the world. Rasmus

Neergaard-Petersen of Denmark got in by winning the Australian Open, while Marco Penge (Spanish Open) and Tom McKibbin of LIV Golf (Hong Kong Open) also qualified.

The Masters is keen on keep-

ing the field under 100 players — not since 1966 has it exceeded that number — and it would appear to be on track to stay that way. Two spots will be filled by the Latin America Amateur Championship in January

and the South African Open in February.

There are 12 main PGA Tour events before the Masters on April 9-12, with four of them big events in which most of the field already will be eligible.

Woods did not play a tournament in 2025, first because of a ruptured Achilles tendon, and then because of a seventh back surgery. His recovery is close to allowing him to play and he's likely to be healthy enough before the Masters.

Gerard was at No. 57 in the world when he chose to go to Mauritius, a small island in the Indian Ocean, for a tournament co-sanctioned by the European tour and Sunshine Tour of South Africa. He needed to finish fourth and lost in a playoff to Jayden Schaper. □



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Create precious memories in the heart of Costa Linda Beach Resort Water's Edge Restaurant offers the complete vacation experience!



(Eagle Beach) – Consider your family dinner plans taken care of at Water's Edge. Located in the heart of the Costa Linda Beach Resort and on the shores of the world-famous Eagle Beach in Aruba, Water's Edge offers an elegant yet cozy dining experience that the entire family can enjoy. Whether you're craving Steak, Seafood, International Dishes or a bit of the Caribbean flare, Water's Edge caters to all your culinary needs, all the while offering you a cozy and flexible service with a spectacular view of Aruba's top-rated sandy beaches.

Water's Edge's new menu has a great variety of appetizers, main courses and delicious desserts all on one menu specially made just for you. From the minute you arrive there will be a great staff welcoming you with the most contagious smiles and warmth. Flexible and professional service allows you to enjoy your meal in the cool and elegant indoor dining area, on the sandy, breezy beaches of Eagle Beach or by the open bar outside. Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, Water's Edge has it all for you, any time of the day.

Start your day off with a hearty breakfast. Water's Edge offers a variety of delicious breakfast items, including their house specialties of Avocado Toast, Chicken & Waffles made with homemade Belgium waffles and topped



with a gorgeous hot honey sauce. If you want something on the sweeter side, try their Crème Brûlée French Toast, served with an in-house mascarpone whip cream and topped with fresh fruit and powdered sugar. Or maybe the Traditional American Breakfast is more to your liking, complete with any kind of serving of eggs, bacon, sausage and toast, served with a side of hash browns.

For lunch, keep it easy with their handheld items like their Bacon and Cheddar Burger, Mediterranean Quesadillas or Street Tacos. Want a taste of the Caribbean? Try the Grouper Reuben; A local twist to the traditional Reuben, complete with rye bread, in-house 1000 island dressing, sauerkraut and grilled grouper, served with a side of Cajun Fries.

Dinner plans are set with Water's Edge mouthwatering dinner menu. Start your gastronomic journey with a scrumptious appetizer such as the Maryland Crab Cakes, maybe the Crispy Calamari or the delectable Coconut Shrimp. You can also opt for their Water's Edge House Wedge Salad or freshly made Shrimp Louie Salad, made with poached shrimp, tossed in Louie dressing, fresh avocados and vine ripe tomatoes. For something a bit heartier, try their classic French Onion Soup, Lobster Bisque or Crab and Corn Chowder.

Follow your appetizers with your choice of Seafood, Chicken or Pasta dishes. Enjoy their succulent Shrimp and Clam Sauce with Angel Hair Pasta, a nice plate of Chicken Francese or explore the Water's Edge Fish Market—your pick of Mahi Mahi, Snapper, Grouper or Salmon, served with homemade mashed potatoes, sauce of choice and fresh herbs and vegetables.

Meat Lovers will have their fix with choices of Steak, including a Petite Filet, French Rack of Lambs or their famous 14oz pan-seared Pork finished with a fantastic apple glaze. All our steaks options are seasoned with a blend of kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper. Served with homemade mashed potatoes, seasoned vegetables and a choice of red wine reduction, green peppercorn demi-glace, mushroom sauce, chimichurri or bacon blue cheese butter. Enjoy it with a side of fresh asparagus, seasonal vegetables, and four different types of fries. Combine your meal with your personal



choice of international and exclusive wines.

Kids will enjoy every item of the specially compiled Kids Menu and there are also optional dishes for all vegans, vegetarians and gluten-free guests.

End the culinary voyage with some luscious sweetness. Choose from a variety of dessert options, including a piece of coconut flan, NY cheesecake, carrot cake, chocolate brownie or our classic Tiramisu with kahlua and amaretto served with chocolate sauce and coffee jelly. Not to mention the fresh and light piece of key lime pie.

Live entertainment

For seven nights a week, there is live entertainment by the best local artists for you to enjoy. Whether you're in a romantic mood, or more in a swinging mood, every night is a relaxing experience under the stars, where you can combine great music with delicious cocktails. In addition, Water's Edge offers three daily Happy Hours from 12pm-1pm, 4pm-6pm and again from 9pm-10pm with all premium brands specially priced.

Water's Edge prides itself on bringing elegance and comfort to your dining experience, offering personalized service fit for everybody's needs.

Water's Edge is open daily from 8am – 11pm

To reserve your table please call +297 583 8000 Ext. 8106 or + 297 586 9494 (direct), or reserve your table online at reservations@watersedgearuba.com. For more information about the menus, entertainment and hours, please visit the website watersedgearuba.com